

# Chinese Character for Luck

Chinese New Year is one of the most important Chinese holidays. The festival traditionally begins on the first of January and ends on the 15th, or when the Lantern Festival takes place, where red lanterns are strung all around the city and temples. These red lanterns are symbols of good luck and prosperity. This holiday, bring some New Year's luck to your home by creating these delightful paper lanterns with just a few simple art supplies. Make more than one and string them around your home to welcome the New Year!

This is a great activity for your kindergartener to do to help her build her fine motor skills and teach her something about the Chinese culture.

## What You Need:

- 1 piece of red construction paper
- 1 piece of yellow construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Pen
- Chinese writing from the template below. This Chinese character means good luck, or prosperity.

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## What You Do:

1. Fold the red paper in half lengthwise like a hot dog. Set the fold on the bottom close to you.
2. Draw a line about an inch from the top horizontally across the paper.
3. Draw vertical lines starting at the bottom fold up to the top horizontal line. Continue drawing vertical lines all the way across the paper an inch across.
4. Using scissors, cut these vertical lines. Be careful not to cross the horizontal line at the top!
5. Unfold the paper. Keeping the cut lines vertical, wrap the paper around into a circular shape and glue or tape the top and bottom ends together.
6. Using the yellow paper, cut off a one-inch strip from the long side. Glue this along the bottom of your lantern.
7. Now it's time to make a handle. Cut off a one-inch-wide strip from the short end of the yellow paper. Glue or tape on your handle.
8. To make a bottom fringe, take the remaining yellow paper and fold it into a long rectangle.
9. Cut it in half. Take one rectangle, and cut strips about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " all across the short side of the paper. These strips should be about 4" long. Tape or glue them to the inside of the bottom of the lantern.
10. Use the pen and write some New Year's wishes on the yellow strips that you taped. For example, wish for good health or for good fortune this coming year.
11. Cut out the Chinese writing, and glue or tape it onto the front of your lantern. Hang your lantern for all to see.

If you want to add more decoration to the lanterns, have your child draw a picture of a dragon or other icon on the red construction paper before cutting it. Gung Hay Fat Choy (Happy New Year in Chinese)!